Word Toss

This pre-assessment strategy helps students make predictions about text they’ll be reading. It also allows the teacher to gauge the students’ current knowledge of the content.

# How it works:

1. Identify major concepts for the text the students will be reading. Write 7 to 10 words or phrases identifying these concepts on separate pieces of overhead transparency film.
2. Randomly place the prepared strips on the overhead so that they appear to have been tossed there.
3. Ask the students to work in pairs or small groups. Explain that each group should write a sentence or two using some or all of the terms on the overhead. The sentences should show how the students predict the terms will be related to each other in the material the class is about to read.
4. Have students read their sentences/predictions aloud. Don’t worry about the accuracy of the statements at this point.
5. Have students read the text and check the accuracy of their sentence predictions. Invite them to revise their predictions to reflect what they learned from reading the text.

C:\Documents and Settings\shirley.barclay\Local Settings\Temporary Internet Files\Content.IE5\OC458568\MCj03576470000[1].wmfBy using this strategy, you’ve given the students a chance to practice making predictions and then go back and evaluate those predictions. You’ve established prior knowledge. You’ve enabled the students to be curious and motivated to see if their predictions are correct. And you’ve supported reading comprehension by giving the students clued about what they should be watching for in the text.